

## **BLHS 111 – 01 The New Millennium**

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Tuesdays, 6:00 PM – 9:35 PM, Spring 2018

Berkley Center Conference Room, 3307 M Street NW Suite 200

Georgetown University (SCS)

Credits: 4

### **General Course Description:**

This course is taken as the student's final course in the Core in that it draws on all the Core Courses. The class is a hybrid of traditional in-class seminar work and individual research and writing in directed exercises as part of the completion of a major research paper. The class is therefore composed of two parts: 1) we meet as a seminar that studies a comprehensive theme drawing together many themes from the other core BALS classes; 2) students work individually and together in group exercises on the development of a significant research and writing project that the student completes, in collaboration with the professor and in dialogue with classmates.

- 1) The comprehensive theme for the seminar portion of the course is the question of law and order, with a focus on the intersections of law with moral and religious culture. Through a close reading of thinkers and a range of US law cases and constitutional documents, we will consider many questions about how humans organize themselves into political societies regulated by law, to institute order and thwart violence. How the law and moral/religious culture and institutions relate to the law will be a key focus. The course will be conducted mostly through discussion and in-depth analysis of the assigned readings, with some background lectures as appropriate. Students should be prepared to participate actively, based on a thoughtful reading of the texts. This theme is chosen as a way to tie together a number of themes students have encountered in other parts of the core and apply them to a contemporary set of issues.
- 2) The other significant part of this course will be each student's work on a significant research and writing project. Over the course of the semester, students will develop an in-depth research topic and draft a substantial research paper on a topic the student chooses. Ideal papers identify a significant problem (whether about an idea, or a geo-political challenge, or a public policy issue, for instance), analyze existing approaches to the issue, and argue for a well-justified approach to or solution for the problem.

### **Course Goals**

This course will allow the student to analyze and summarize issues in a broadly synthetic way across the range of topics discussed in the other BALS core courses. Student learning will be documented through in class discussions and the production of a major paper that will show how the student reflects synthetically and analytically on the issues. Successful students will gain knowledge about the theoretical and historical issues of the BALS core and be able to engage in analytical reasoning about the following issues:

- 1) Articulate the diversity of thought about patterns seen across the intellectual, material, and historical material of the past four millenia.
- 2) Describe the basic issues of law and order, historically and theoretically.
- 3) Articulate the challenges to human life (especially economics, religions, and moral values) under past and present modes of law and political society.
- 4) Understand and describe the modes of human freedom and moral life, manifest in transformed moral, social, and political realities, in the modern world.

5) Develop a research project about an issue related to these topics and construct a substantial research paper, including all of the appropriate steps of research: choosing topics, problem identification, methodology, thesis development, outline production, and drafting.

### Expectations and Assignments

- You should strive to achieve the **ideals of a liberal arts education**: free and candid exchange of ideas, rigorous critique of claims, and toleration for considering variant positions.
- **Thoughtful reading** of the texts in preparation for the class is expected and essential.
- Students should be prepared to participate actively in each week's seminar discussions.
  - **Participation is worth 15% of your grade.**
    - In the seminar, students are expected to be 'ready' to participate at each moment and to discuss and analyze the arguments of particular texts. I will take note of students who do well, poorly, or are not adequately prepared for class. To receive the full credit for class participation, students do not need to ask brilliant questions or answer questions correctly in all circumstances; rather, the credit will be received when it is clear that a good faith attempt has been made by the student to read and comprehend the material and the student can ask reasonable questions about the material, even if they may on occasion not be perfectly correct in their understanding of a particular case or issue. If it is clear that students did not make a good faith effort to read and understand material, and do not make a good faith effort to participate in class (either in passing when directly asked a question or in never voluntarily contributing on their own), then they will receive reduced or no credit for class participation.
- You may use your **Laptop Computers** in class for note-taking, for looking up relevant items on the web related to class issues, and for referring to related class readings. All other uses of laptops during class time are unacceptable.
- Students must adhere to the principles of conduct set forth in the Georgetown University **Honor System** unconditionally. I assume you have read the honor code material located at [www.georgetown.edu/honor](http://www.georgetown.edu/honor), and in particular have read the following documents: Honor Council Pamphlet, "What is Plagiarism?", "Sanctioning Guidelines", and "Expedited Sanctioning Process."
  - Submitting material in fulfillment of the requirements of this course means that you have abided by the Georgetown honor pledge:
    - *In the pursuit of the high ideals and rigorous standards of academic life, I commit myself to respect and uphold the Georgetown Honor System: To be honest in any academic endeavor, and to conduct myself honorably, as a responsible member of the Georgetown community, as we live and work together.*
  - Any sign of violations, including plagiarism, dishonesty, or cheating will be referred to the Honor Council and your Dean(s).

- Any incident of plagiarism will constitute a failure in the assignment and zero credit for that portion of the grade. More severe sanctions may be administered by the Honor Council.
- **Turnitin.com** Students acknowledge that by taking this course all required papers may be submitted for a Textual Similarity Review to Turnitin.com for the detection of plagiarism. All submitted papers will be added as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers in the future. Use of the Turnitin.com service is subject to the terms of use agreement posted on the Turnitin.com site.
- **Attend the class sessions.** If you have a legitimate excuse, I need to know it (by email). Otherwise, be there. Legitimate excuses include illness, family situation, or other events or responsibilities that may occasionally draw you away from a regular class meeting. To be legitimate, I need to know about it beforehand, or it may be deemed legitimate if I receive a notice from your dean, in the case of more serious issues.
  - Attendance will be recorded at each class.
  - **Excused absences** *do not* yield a grade penalty, although I reserve the right to impose reasonable “make-up” meetings or assignments to ensure that the covered material is satisfactorily understood.
  - You will be penalized for **unexcused absences**. Penalties for unexcused absences are as follows:
    - 1                                    1 grade down (e.g. a B reduced to a C)
    - 2 or more unexcused absences will constitute a failure to complete the requirements of the course satisfactorily. Any student who misses more than two class sessions, including online sessions and assignments, for any reason may be deemed to have failed the course.
- Complete the **Final Research Paper**, and intermediate steps of its preparation, by the due dates.
  - The goal of the research paper is to allow you to dive deeply into a specific issue from the range of themes, issues, and problems you have addressed across the BALS core and to synthetically and analytically address this specific issue in a way that considers multiple time periods, traditions of culture and thought, and geographic diversity you have been exposed to in the core. The project is individualized and each student will be working on different issues. You may take up an issue previously written about in a course, in greater depth and with a greater range of material researched (e.g. if you wrote about Aquinas’ natural law theory in BLHS 104, you could write about natural law theory in the 20<sup>th</sup> century regarding just war theory and how it refers back to, yet transforms, Aquinas’ thought).
  - During the course of the semester, from the beginning, you will work toward the goal of a final research paper, including the following major steps:
    - NOTE: due dates are subject to change given the pace of the class.
    - **NOTE\*\*\*\*: other, additional, intermediate steps will be due most weeks.**
      - **I will make these assignments in class and follow-up with a blackboard announcement;**
      - **they will be due within a few days of the class to be either emailed to me or submitted to blackboard;**

- **these will be graded pass/fail;**
    - **some will be peer review exercises, some will be individual work on components of the paper**
  - Construct a topic proposal by week 2
    - Due Jan 29
  - construct a refined proposal that identifies a topic and a research problem and a thesis, (the claim you will argue in the paper) worth 5% of your grade
    - Due Feb 5
  - research relevant secondary and primary sources, including pertinent literature on the topic already in existence and within which you will contextualize your own argument
  - draft an outline and annotated bibliography (in which you identify important sources and how you will utilize them) worth 15% of your grade
    - Due Feb 26
    - Peer review due March 12
  - Write an introduction section
    - Due March 26
  - write a first draft of a section, part of which will serve as the basis of a peer review and assessment of your paper and argument. The peer review will be worth 15% of your grade.
    - Due (section draft) April 2
    - Due (peer review) April 9
  - write a first draft of a 2<sup>nd</sup> section
    - Due (section draft) April 16
    - Due (peer review) April 23
  - complete drafting of a 22-25 page research paper due at the end of the semester. This paper will be worth 50% of your grade.
    - Due May 11 by 5pm
  - More details about the topic of the individual assignments will be discussed in class.
  - Papers, insofar as they need citations, will conform to the citation style outlined by Turabian and/or the Chicago Manual of Style.
  - **Late submissions** will be penalized at a 1 grade step down (e.g. a B reduced to a B-) for every 3 hours the assignment is late.
  - **No Incompletes** will be granted except in exceptional circumstances warranted by a family or medical emergency. Arrangements will be made with the appropriate dean and all work will have to be completed by a date set by the dean.
- **Grades:** The grading scale for the course will be:
    - A 93-100 Excellent work
    - A- 90-92
    - B+ 88-89
    - B 83-87 Good work
    - B- 80-82
    - C+ 78-79
    - C 73-77 Average work
    - C- 69-72

- D+ 66-68
  - D 60-65 Poor work
  - F Below 60 Failure to present satisfactory work
- **Recap of Assignments and Grade %**

○ Class Participation and reading reviews	15%
○ Research paper proposal	5%
○ Outline/Bibliography	15%
○ Paper Peer Review	15%
○ Final Draft	50%
100%	
- **Request for Accommodation** based on a physical, emotional or cognitive disability will be referred to the Academic Resource Center. The center's staff will assess the extent of any disability and recommend appropriate accommodations. If you believe you have a disability, then you should contact the Academic Resource Center at 202-687-8354 (arc@georgetown.edu) for further information. The Center is located in the Leavey Center, Suite 335. The Academic Resource Center is the campus office responsible for reviewing documentation provided by students with disabilities and for determining reasonable accommodations in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and University policies.
  - **Instructional Continuity** During inclement weather or other emergencies on a day when we are scheduled to meet face-to-face, check the university's Web site or call (202) 687-7669 for information on whether the university is open. If the university is open, this class will meet. If the university is closed, this class will meet through distance means utilizing discussion exchanges and web-based assignments; check your e-mail for a message from me on how we will proceed in that situation. Due dates for written assignments submitted electronically will not be changed due to campus closings. The university recently has acquired the capability to send text messages and recorded messages about emergencies to cell phones and other mobile devices. Sign up on MyAccess.

## Readings

The seminar will involve close textual readings and discussion. Students are expected to attend class with the readings. All readings will be distributed via blackboard in .pdf format.

## Schedule

Week 1 (Jan 16): Introduction

Week 2 (Jan 23): *Creating Political Society on Earth: Luther On Temporal Authority*

Class discussion of paper topics

- Week 3 (Jan 30): *Creating Moral and Political Society*, Locke, *2nd Treatise of Government* (online source)
- Week 4 (Feb 6): Library Research meeting
- Week 5 (Feb 13): American Constitutional Law and Liberties—the Founding (selections from online sources)
- Week 6 (Feb 20): American Constitutional Law—Fundamental Liberties
- Week 7 (Feb 27): Religious Freedom and Legal Order: *Reynolds v. US*
- Spring break March 6*
- Week 9 (March 13): Research paper Writing and Argument
- Week 10 (March 20): Public Displays of Religion in a Plural Order: *Lynch v. Donnelly*
- Week 11 (March 27): Paper work in class
- Week 12 (April 3): Regulating Sexual Morality: *Bowers v. Hardwick*, *Lawrence v. Texas*
- Week 13 (April 10): Peer review for Drafts
- Week 14 (April 17): Regulating Guns: *D.C. v. Heller*
- Week 15 (April 24): Final class and peer review work

**Papers due by 5pm May 11**